

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 PA-02 /018 R

DRAFTED BY S/S: PTARNOFF:GB

APPROVED BY MR. TARNOFF

-----129920 211748Z /47

O 211725Z APR 78 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 102213 TOSEC 040187

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJECT: EVANS AND NOVAK APRIL 21 WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL  
"THE COMING SALT BATTLE"

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF EVANS/NOVAK EDITORIAL

BEGIN TEXT:

THE QUAGMIRE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IS ABOUT TO ENTER IN  
THE BATTLE OF SALT II IS DEPICTED BY A SECRET STATE  
DEPARTMENT WORKING PAPER THAT CONTRADICTS BOTH PUBLICLY  
STATED POLICY AND EXPERT OPINION.

THE WORKING PAPER ASSERTS THAT THE MINUTEMAN, THE U.S.  
INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE (ICBM), CAN SURVIVE  
SOVIET ATTACK THROUGH THE 1980S IF A HOTLY OPPOSED  
PROTOCOL TO SALT II IS EXTENDED. YET CARTER ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICIALS ARE SELLING THE PROSPECTIVE NEW TREATY ON  
GROUNDS THAT THE PROTOCOL NEED NOT BE EXTENDED WHEN IT  
EXPIRES IN 1980. MOREOVER, PENTAGON EXPERTS SAY THERE IS  
NO WAY SALT II -- PROTOCOL OR NO PROTOCOL -- CAN PROTECT  
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THE MINUTEMAN FROM SOVIET ATTACK.

THOSE CONTRADICTIONS POSE THE CENTRAL QUESTION ABOUT THE  
NEW STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TREATY NEARING COMPLETION:  
WOULD THE UNITED STATES BE LESS OR MORE SECURE BECAUSE  
OF SALT II? THE INTRIGUE THAT LIES AHEAD IN DEBATING  
THAT QUESTION MAY WELL MAKE THE PRESIDENT LOOK BACK AT

HIS JUST-COMPLETED PANAMA CANAL AGONY WITH NOSTALGIC PLEASURE.

A KEY FIGURE IS SEN. HENRY M. JACKSON (D-WASH.). WITHOUT HIS SUPPORT, CARTER WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO WIN THE TWO-THIRDS SENATE VOTE FOR RATIFICATION. JACKSON PRIVATELY SAYS SALT II SO PRESERVES AND AUGMENTS SOVIET STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES THAT HE CANNOT BACK IT.

YET WHITE HOUSE STRATEGISTS FIND A RAY OF HOPE TOWARD WINNING OVER JACKSON AND OTHER DEFENSE-ORIENTED SENATORS. JACKSON FINDS NOTHING ALL THAT ONEROUS IN THE TREATY ITSELF, WHICH WOULD EXPIRE IN 1985. HE OBJECTS TO THE PROTOCOL, EXPIRING IN 1980, WHICH PROHIBITS MOBILE MISSILES (AS WELL AS LIMITING CRUISE MISSILES).

THE RESTRICTION ON MOBILE MISSILES BECOMES DECISIVE BECAUSE RECENT SOVIET MISSILE TESTS REVEAL A DRAMATIC BREAKTHROUGH IN ACCURACY OF SOVIET SS18 AND SS19 ICBMS. ON THE BASIS OF THAT BREAKTHROUGH, SOME PENTAGON ANALYSTS NOW ESTIMATE THAT THE MINUTEMAN WOULD BE VULNERABLE TO SOVIET ATTACK BY THE EARLY 1980S. PUT IN PLAIN LANGUAGE, THAT MEANS A MAJOR ELEMENT IN U.S. STRATEGIC DETERRENCE WILL BE UNABLE TO SURVIVE A SOVIET ATTACK AS EARLY AS THREE YEARS FROM NOW.

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THE ANTIDOTE IS TO CHANGE THE PRESENT MINUTEMAN SILOS AND DEVELOP MOBILE MISSILES (PUSHING AHEAD THE NOW-SUSPENDED MX SURVIVABLE ICBM BASING SYSTEM). BUT ALL SUCH ACTIVITY WOULD BE PROHIBITED BY SALT II, WHICH DOES PERMIT THE SOVIET UNION TO TRANSFORM SINGLE-WARHEAD MISSILES INTO HUNDREDS OF MULTIPLE-WARHEADS AND THEREBY THREATEN THE MINUTEMAN.

THE ANSWER CONSIDERED BY WHITE HOUSE STRATEGISTS IS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE MX IS PROHIBITED ONLY UNTIL THE PROTOCOL EXPIRES (IN 1980 BY U.S. CALCULATIONS, LATER BY RUSSIAN). THE SCOOP JACKSONS CAN BE REASSURED THAT MX DEVELOPMENT WILL BEGIN THEN.

THUS THE STATE DEPARTMENT SALT WORKING PAPER (DATED MARCH 7 AND TITLED "THE VIABILITY OF THE U.S. STRATEGIC DETERRENCE") COMES LIKE A WARNING SIGNAL IN THE NIGHT: "THE CONSTRAINTS ON QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SOVIET ICBMS IN THE DRAFT SALT PROTOCOL HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE THE MINUTEMAN SURVIVABILITY PROBLEM AS LONG AS THE PROTOCOL IS EXTENDED BEYOND 1980. . . WE ESTIMATE THAT EXTENDING THE PROTOCOL MIGHT INCREASE THE THEORETICAL

NUMBER OF MINUTEMAN SURVIVORS IN 1980 FROM ABOUT 100 TO 200."

THE CLAIM THAT SALT II CAN SAVE THE MINUTEMAN ECHOES TWO SECRET STUDIES PREPARED FOR THE PRESIDENT BY ACADEMICALLY ORIENTED THEORETICIANS. A WHITE HOUSE-CONTRACTED STUDY (CALLED THE PRESS REPORT AFTER PRESIDENTIAL SCIENCE ADVISER FRANK PRESS) DENIED ANY "IMMINENT" THREAT TO THE MINUTEMAN, WHICH "WILL REMAIN A SIGNIFICANT SURVIVABLE COMPONENT OF THE U.S DETERRENT THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE 1980S." A DEFENSE DEPARTMENT-CONTRACTED STUDY (CALLED THE JASON REPORT) IS EVEN MORE BLUNT: "PRESENT SOVIET STRATEGIC FORCES POSE NO THREAT TO THE MINUTEMAN."

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THE RESPONSE BY PENTAGON EXPERTS HAS BEEN SHEER OUTRAGE. INTERNAL MEMORANDA AT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT CONTEND THE TWO STUDIES REACH "UNSUBSTANTIATED, OPINIONATED AND UN-FOUNDED CONCLUSIONS" AND "INDULGE IN PROPAGANDA-LIKE STATEMENTS." DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS HAVE NOT MINCED WORDS IN CLOSED-DOOR TESTIMONY ON CAPITOL HILL. THE MINUTEMAN IS QUICKLY BECOMING VULNERABLE.

BUT IS THE PRESIDENT GETTING THE WORD? PENTAGON EXPERTS DOUBT IT. AND IF CARTER BELIEVES THE MINUTEMAN IS TRULY PROTECTED UNDER THE PROTOCOL OF SALT II, HE BECOMES ENTWINED IN A MASS OF CONTRADICTIONS FROM WHICH THERE IS NO EASY ESCAPE.

IF THE MINUTEMAN CAN SURVIVE THROUGH THE 1980S, WHY DO THE PENTAGON EXPERTS SAY OTHERWISE? IF IT CANNOT, WILL CARTER PROMISE DEVELOPMENT OF MOBILE MISSILES ONCE THE PROTOCOL EXPIRES? IF HE DOES, WHAT ABOUT STATE DEPARTMENT CLAIMS THAT THE PROTOCOL PROTECTS THE MINUTEMAN? HOW, THEN, CAN JACKSON'S CONCERNS ABOUT SOVIET STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES BE SATISFIED CONSISTENT WITH PUSHING SALT II? JIMMY CARTER MAY YET YEARN FOR THE CLASSIC SIMPLICITY OF WRESTLING WITH THE DECONCINI RESERVATION. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014